

## Charter School Application Guideline

(submitted 5/12/11)

**Name of proposed charter school: TEAMS Charter School  
(Technology/Engineering/Math/Science)**

- a) **Educational Mission:** The mission of TEAMS Charter School is to expand opportunities for all students especially those who face the perception of bleak prospects because of where they live. TEAMS will offer a sound college prep program with a career focus and an emphasis on technology, mathematics, science and engineering. Accompanying this mission is an articulated pathway into a certificate program, NHTI or four year college enhanced by early exposure to careers. *(last sentence has been deleted – March 2012 per request from TEAMS)*
- b) **Governance and organizational structure and plan:** The charter school will be governed by a board of five people. The structure of the Board will be with traditional positions such as president and vice chair and other positions as determined necessary. A set of policies will govern the various student, staffing and management areas of the school. Part of the in-kind services that will be provided by the Merrimack Valley School District include financial management tasks including payroll.
- c) **Methods by which trustees and their terms are determined:** Terms and other governing procedures will be written in policy and voted upon by the board as a whole.
- d) **General description and proposed or potential location of facilities to be used:** The school will be housed at Washington Street School in Penacook, NH also known as the Learning Center. Within the building TEAMS will have 945 sq. feet with a potential for another 792 sq. feet. The possibility of another 1200+/- sq. feet is there should the population grow to the anticipated number of 75 students. This total exceeds State square footage requirements of 30 sq. feet per student.
- e) **Maximum number, grade or age levels and as applicable, other information about pupils to be served:** It is envisioned that the demographic we will attract are those students who, have lost the drive and enthusiasm for learning due to family situations, economics, classroom type offerings or structure and often inflexible learning opportunities in traditional high schools. The target population is that which is educationally disadvantaged and most at risk in rural and urban settings. Specifically we are looking to accept juniors who have shown promise in the core subjects, but have not achieved their potential. Students will have coursework and project orientated instruction through their senior year. A high school diploma will be offered to those successfully completing the required State Standards for graduation. It is anticipated that we will have 25 students in

our first year. We expect 50 students in year two up to a maximum of 75 students beyond that. A rubric, for applicants, will help to ensure that our enrollees meet the criteria required in the grant NH CSP Objectives. In addition students will have taken the PSAT as sophomores as well as the regularly scheduled math and science classes. Students will be able to experience a non-traditional school day that focuses on their individual learning and the placement of coaching in areas where there is a need to better understand content. In addition a student may earn up to 15 NHTI college credits concurrent with their TEAMS work, use their special project as their senior project (a requirement for seniors at MV) and potentially may be able to graduate early. This is expected to be a high quality charter school that will expect a commitment from its student body. The charter focus areas include the following:

1. Architecture and Engineering
2. Chemistry and Bio-medicine
3. Space, Astronomy and Astronautics
4. Computer Science, System Design and Simulation
5. Environment and Global Sustainability
6. Mathematics and Physics
7. Aeronautics and Aviation

- f) **Curriculum:** Our students will meet competencies through a variety of learning opportunities. This will occur using several different learning paths that include VLACS, Project Running Start, E-Learning opportunities and NHTI classes; however, the crux of this school is the coaching with experts in the fields of engineering, technology, math and science. These experts will serve as coaches for students to guide them through real life meaningful projects. Our program is anticipating a partnership with Academy for Science and Design for guidance with the competencies and advice implementing projects. TEAMS will be operational for six hours per day meeting the, at least, the minimum standards for attendance of 990 hours per school year per ED 306.18. The concept for what our classrooms will look like can best be described as a “hybrid school”. (ref. Harvard Education Newsletter March/April p.3) We will combine online curricula and face to face teaching and coaching. Our students go to a physical school but will spend much of the day on computer working at their own pace using curricula that can be highly individualized. Students will have individual and/or small group tutorial and instruction designed to reinforce skills or extend learning through projects and other type of activities. Student transcripts will be assimilated to meet the competency track upon acceptance. Gaps and academic shortcomings will result in the course recommendations for that student. It should be noted that the terms competencies and course credit are being used. The diploma will be based upon competencies and the completion and mastery of those competencies. The path toward achieving this will be through courses. (This clarifying language is used so that a system of conversion is maintained to make

transitions from the public school and back again is easily determined.) Attached are the PLATO listing of courses accompanied by the VLACS course catalog of offerings. Also attached is the agreement with NHTI that extends course opportunities to interested TEAMS Charter School students. (attachment #'s 1,2,3)

- g) **Academic and other learning goals and objectives:** The obvious short term goals are to improve student achievement resulting in improved graduations rates. Certainly our goal beyond graduation is that our students are accepted at colleges, technical schools or other post secondary learning or career advancement opportunities. The standardized testing mechanisms we intend to use are the PSAT and SAT. This can be coupled with NWEA testing to be current and has the ability to indicate where midstream adjustments need to be made. We believe that post secondary schools in the sciences and engineering fields rely heavily on the SAT as an indicator for success and admission in their schools. The PSAT is typically taken by the sophomore year of high school. Our program will focus the junior year student with challenging courses including an SAT test prep class as required for all of our students. The pre and post scores will, we expect, show growth and, coupled with the real life project, will steer students toward aforementioned type schools.
- h) **Achievement tests to be used to measure pupil academic and other goal achievement including, but not limited to, objective and age appropriate measures of literacy and numeracy skills, including spelling, reading, expository writing, history, geography, science and mathematics:** The standardized testing mechanisms we intend to use are the PSAT and SAT. This can be coupled with NWEA testing to be current and has the ability to indicate where midstream adjustments need to be made. In addition students will take the NECAP Science test as Juniors.
- i) **For schools offering high school grade levels, graduation requirements sufficient to ensure that the school has provided an adequate education for its pupils:** The high school requirements from the school of residence that the student originated prior to applying to the TEAMS Charter School, would be met and will be addressed in the grant proposal. We anticipate that the TEAM Charter School curriculum would match or exceed credit requirements at the local schools. For reader clarification, students will be offered a diploma option which would require the student to attend, at a minimum what would be his junior and senior year. Conversely, a student may opt to return to his school of residence after his junior year in which case the credits conversion is necessary.
- j) **Staffing overview, including qualifications sought for professionals and paraprofessionals:** Staffing at the TEAMS Charter School will be made up of professional community members and retired or part time teaching professionals. Our staff will consist of adjunct members and hired as contracted service providers. We will not have any full time teachers. We expect to tap the wealth of talent within the greater Concord and Manchester area of retired engineers, technology professionals, scientists and retired

teachers of math or science. Our staffing will meet the requirements of the charter school laws having no less than 50% of the staff being highly qualified, certified teachers. Ideally all staff will be either HQT NH certified teachers in the subject areas they would be guiding students though or at least have three years of successful teaching experience in those specific disciplines. Recruitment will be through advertising in the local school districts using, mostly cost free methods; these include e-mail postings on district sites and direct mailings using retirement lists acquired through local public sources. (Board minutes, word of mouth etc.) Administrative services will be provided by a NH certified principal with at least 5 years of successful experience at the high school level.

- k) **Personnel compensation plan, including provisions for leaves and other benefits, if any:** Compensation for the **instructional staff** will begin at \$29.00 per hour. Specifically this is for the coaching professionals who are certified or have been hired as a result of their years in the fields of engineering, technology, math or science. The faculty is hired as adjunct and is a contracted service. No benefits beyond the hourly wage exist and with the exception of tax withdrawal no other benefits are available. Secretarial services will be for four and a half hours per day at a rate of up to \$15.00 per hour. The **secretarial** position will be for 4 hours per day 5 days per week for 36 weeks with 20 days budgeted as needed and determined by the administrator for summertime work. The **administrator** for this school is budgeted for four hours per day for 36 weeks. In addition to this an additional 20 days is budgeted as determined by need and work load. There is a **nurse** on site at the Washington Street School facility. A stipend for accessing the nurse is budgeted at \$250.00 annually. An agreement with MV is in place that supports this agreement. The compensation and benefits of these staff is crafted in such a way because there are no bargaining units or established collective bargaining agreement. Therefore, hourly wages are determined by marketplace supply and demand. Retired professionals typically do not need benefits and other charters have been successful staffing using these types of compensation plans. In order to remain cost effective and at the same time provide the necessary services a fiscally conservative approach is required.
- l) **Pupil transportation plan, including reasonable provision from the charter school's own resources for transportation of pupils residing outside the district in which the charter school is physically located.** In-district students may take advantage of district busing provided they indicate they intend to do so and the bus passes by their normal stop. Or in the case of students outside the MV district, they may transport themselves to the charter school or to a scheduled stop and ride the bus into Penacook provided it is the destination of that bus. It is noted that transportation to school of high school students is not required; however the MV district supports this no cost extension to the charter school students. This will continue as long as there is no additional cost to the MV School District.

- m) **Statement of assurances related to nondiscrimination according to relevant state and federal laws:** Attached is a General Assurances for FY 2011. Please refer to the attachment regarding Policy for proposed language. The policy recommendations relate to non-discrimination according to relevant state and federal laws. In addition the packet includes recommended policy regarding student discipline as well as operating procedural policies. These will be in place and in compliance with federal and state laws. (Attachment #4 Assurances; #5 Policy Manual)
- n) **Method of coordinating with a pupil's local education agency (LEA) responsible for matters pertaining to any required special education programs or services including method of compliance with all federal and state laws pertaining to educationally disabled students:** The responsibility for special education services including costs rests with the sending school district. Placement at TEAMS is a district decision in conjunction with the parent. The sending district will be responsible for the student's IEP. The TEAMS administrator or designee will be responsible for scheduling meetings as required by law to monitor and implement a student's IEP.
- o) **Admission procedures:** It is anticipated that we will have 25 students in our first year. A rubric/application survey, for applicants, will help to ensure that our enrollees meet the criteria required in the grant NH CSP Objectives. The rubric/application survey will include among other things categories for hardship, family history (such as if anyone in their family has graduated from high school), financial burden of the family, ability in the science and math fields, PSAT completion and teacher recommendation. Our partnership with ASD will address the details of admissions during the planning year. (see Attachment # 6 enrollment application)
- p) **Philosophy of pupil governance and discipline, and age-appropriate due process procedures to be used for disciplinary matters including suspension and expulsion:** The students are expected to be motivated and willing to be held accountable for common rules and regulations. This school will have some components that may have students working independently or at NHTI. These inherently have some freedom that requires a level of trust. Trust with accountability will be the philosophy. The result of poor choices regarding serious school or federal and local laws will be handled by governance of policy that will include suspension and expulsion. Student and staff safety is a priority. ( refer to attachment #4)
- q) **Method of administering fiscal accounts and reporting, including a provision requiring fiscal audits and reports to be performed by an independent certified public accountant.** The budget will be managed by the administrator of the charter school which includes the daily management of staff hours and supplies requests. This is also inclusive of any other daily financial operation. Processing of paychecks and audits will be contracted through SAU 46 and its financial office as per RSA 194-B:3,II. An annual audit will be done by an independent certified public accountant.

- r) **Annual Budget, including all sources of funding:** The primary source of funding for the start-up costs will be from the grant. Subsequent funding will be from the State of NH adequacy allotment of \$5,450 per student. In year one the revenue source will be \$166,000 (grant fund). In year two the revenue sources will be \$166,000 (grant fund) and \$135,000 (adequacy funds x 25 students). Year three revenue sources will be \$166,000 (grant fund) and \$ 270,000 (adequacy funds x 50 students). In years four and five it is expected that the total budget will be \$408,000 (adequacy funds x 75 students). Any fluctuation in these budget figures reflect the anticipated grant approval for years 1-3 as well as the anticipated enrollment projections for operating years 4-5. A five year budget projection is attached. (attachment #7)
- s) **School calendar arrangement and the number and duration of days Pupils are to be served pursuant to RSA 194-B: 8, III:** TEAMS will be operational for six hours per day meeting the, at least, the minimum standards for attendance of 990 hours per school year per ED 306.18. Students may potentially be engaged in college courses off site from the Charter School at NHTI. In addition, there are online resources such as VLACS and Plato that will be a part of the student's school day. Scheduling of staffing will be determined by need and schedule. Transportation to the charter school and NHTI are the responsibility of the student and parent.
- t) **Provision for providing continuing evidence of Insurance coverage:** The Insurance Carrier will be PRIMEX and will be contracted upon approval of this charter and occupation of the facility.
- u) **Identity of consultant to be used for various services, if known:** The educational consultant (s) will be NH State Certified with successful experience as a teacher, principal and/or superintendent. Other consultants will include experts in the fields of engineering and technology.
- v) **Philosophy of parent involvement and related plans and procedures:** The value of parental and community involvement cannot be underestimated. It is essential that we utilize the resources in the community, including parents who may be able to contribute to the educational mission of TEAMS. Policies will be adopted and /or developed to address the use of volunteers based upon NHSBA recommended policies.
- w) **A plan to develop and disseminate information to assist parents and pupils with decision-making about their choice of school:** A Recruitment and Admissions Committee, appointed by the Board will establish admissions procedures, calendar and recruitment of students. The committee will notify the candidate of the status of the application and information about openings, special education and the lottery. A Lottery will be used in the event that there are more applicants that spaces available. This will be conducted by the Charter school and remaining students will be placed on a waiting list. The Recruitment and Admissions Committee will inform all applicants of admission lottery results. Successful applicants will have an individual meeting with parents and the student to confirm interest and compatibility with the mission, goals and objectives of the school.

Parents and students will be notified that they must withdraw from their current District in order to have the funds follow the child; however, Merrimack Valley students will be reassigned for attendance purposes.

- x) **A global hold-harmless clause which states:** The charter school, its successors and assigns, covenants and agrees at all times to indemnify and hold harmless the Merrimack Valley School District, and any other school district which sends its students to the charter school, and their school boards, officers, directors, agents, employees, (the “indemnified parties”) all funding districts and sources and their successors and assigns, from any and all claims, demands, actions and causes of action, whether in law or in equity, and all damages, costs losses and expenses, including but not limited to reasonable attorneys’ fees and legal costs, for any action or inaction of the charter school, its board, officers, agents, representatives, contractors, guests and invitees, or pupils.
- y) **Severability Provisions and a statement of assurance that any provision of the charter school contract found by competent authority to be contrary to applicable law, rule, or regulation shall not be enforceable:** Upon approval of the charter the Superintendent or other appropriate representative will sign the General Assurances document for the charter school. If the provision of the charter agreement is determined to be unenforceable or invalid for any reason, the remainder of the charter agreement shall remain in effect unless otherwise terminated by one or both of the parties in accordance with the terms contained herein.  
(Attachment #4)
- z) **Provision for dissolution of the charter school including disposition of its agents or amendment of its program plan:** In the event the Charter School should cease operating for whatever reason, including the non-renewal or revocation of its Charter, the Board of Trustees shall consult with its attorney and also the Department of Education to assure that contractual and financial obligations are met and that technical assistance is sought. The planned sale and distribution of any assets shall assure that any financial obligations of the academy are met and that the public schools are offered any remaining property in proportion to their financial support of the academy over the history of the school.
- aa) **In the case of the conversion of a public school to a charter conversion school, provision for alternative arrangements for pupils who choose not to attend and teachers who choose not to teach at the charter school:** The charter school will not revert to a charter conversion school. It will only revert back to be a part of MVHS and therefore dissolve. Students will go back to the High School of origin.
- bb) **A plan for the education of the school’s pupils after the charter school may cease operation:** As stated in (aa) the students will go back to MVHS.
- cc) **In addition to an application, each charter school applicant, in consultation with the local school board, shall prepare a proposed contract. The contract shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following elements:**

**(1) Purpose. (2) Written policies. (3) Authority of trustees. (4) Reporting, fiscal accounting and fiscal audits to be performed by a certified public accountant. (5) Contract agreements. (6) Indemnification. (7) Secular orientation. (8) Non-discrimination. (9) Health and safety. (10) Enrollment. (11) Attendance. (12) Availability of services. (13) Assessment of pupils. (14) Tuition and funding. (15) Property ownership. (16) Records. (17) Severability in accordance with subparagraph (y) above. (18) Assignment of contract. (19) Insurance. (20) Revocation. (21) Amendment. (22) Renewal. (23) Entire agreement. (24) Location, which shall be identified prior to submission to the legislative body. The development of this Charter School will meet final approval of the local school board and the voters of MVSD. In accordance with a public charter school operated through a local school district the charter school will have a direct relationship with the district policies. The local board and charter board of trustees will enter into a written agreement once final approval for the charter is confirmed.**

**An outline of the proposed accountability plan which clarifies expectations for evaluating the school's program and which contains an acknowledgement that a full accountability plan shall be developed and ready to implement prior to the date of opening.** The Charter School committee will develop a comprehensive Accountability Plan during the planning months. This process will be led by a NH consultant.

**The development of the accountability plan will be based on:**

\*A review of NWEA data for all students in the charter and students in like grades of MVHS.

\*A review of available state testing data for all students in the charter programs as compared to those in MVHS.

\*Fiscal accountability for the program based on yearly artifacts and long term sustainability.

\*Customer satisfaction surveys for students, parents, teachers, and community members involved.

\*A review of all the program data and its contribution to the success of the program.

\*A review of the formative assessment process and portfolio system to identify the related success at supporting greater student achievement.